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~~What is claimed is:~~

1. An incoming telephone call blocking device associated with a telephone line operatively associated with a user's telephone, said blocking device comprising:

5 means for activating blocking of incoming telephone calls;
means for requesting a caller to enter a code for passing the incoming telephone calls;
means for determining if a correct code has been entered by the caller; and

10 means for allowing an incoming telephone call of the caller to pass through where it is determined that the caller has entered a correct code.

2. The telephone call blocking device of claim 1 wherein
15 when blocking has been activated the user's telephone is disconnected from the telephone line.

3. The telephone call blocking device of claim 2 wherein
said user's telephone is disconnected from the telephone line by
20 a first switch.

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4. The telephone call blocking device of claim 1 further comprising a means for detecting an incoming telephone call when blocking has been activated.

25 5. The telephone call blocking device of claim 4 wherein said means for detecting is a ring detector.

6. The telephone call blocking device of claim 4 wherein
30 said means for detecting is in communication with the telephone line through a switch which is in a closed position when blocking is at least initially activated.

7. The telephone call blocking device of claim 6 wherein
said ring detector is in communication with a microprocessor;
wherein upon detection of an incoming telephone call by said
ring detector said microprocessor activates said means for
5 requesting by closing an answer switch.

A 8. The telephone call blocking device of claim 1 wherein
said means for requesting is a voice response unit and a tone
receiver which inform the caller that blocking has been
10 activated and request the caller to enter a code to allow the
caller's incoming telephone call to pass through.

9. The telephone call blocking device of claim 1 further
comprising means for disconnecting the incoming telephone call
15 if the correct code has not been entered within a predetermined
time period.

10. The telephone call blocking device of claim 1 further
comprising means for alerting a person that an approved incoming
20 telephone call has been received.

11. The telephone call blocking device of claim 10 wherein
said means for alerting is a localized ringing signal associated
with a speaker.

25 12. The telephone call blocking device of claim 10 further
comprising means for deactivating said means for alerting when
the user's telephone is answered.

30 13. The telephone call blocking device of claim 12 wherein
said means for activating including means for setting a
reference time and a beginning and ending time period.

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14. The telephone call blocking device of claim 13 further comprising means for reactivating blocking of incoming telephone calls once the user's telephone is hung up if still within the beginning and ending time period.

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15. An incoming telephone call blocking device associated with a telephone line operatively associated with a user's telephone, said blocking device comprising:

10 means for setting a beginning and ending time period for activating blocking of incoming telephone calls;

15 a ring detector for sensing an incoming telephone call when blocking has been activated, said ring detector in communication with the telephone line through a switch which is in a closed position when blocking is at least initially activated;

20 a microprocessor in communication with said ring detector;

means for requesting a caller to enter a code for passing the incoming telephone call;

means for determining if a correct code has been entered by the caller; and

25 means for allowing an incoming telephone call of the caller to pass through where it is determined that the caller has entered a correct code;

means for disconnecting the incoming telephone call if the correct code has not been entered within a predetermined time period;

means for generating a localized ringing signal which is associated with a speaker to inform a user that an incoming telephone call has been passed through;

30 means for deactivating said means for alerting when the user's telephone is answered;

wherein when blocking has been activated the user's telephone is disconnected from the telephone line by a first switch;

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wherein upon sensing of an incoming telephone call by said ring detector said microprocessor activates said means for requesting by closing a second switch.

5 16. The telephone call blocking device of claim 15 wherein said means for requesting is a voice response unit and a tone receiver which inform the caller that blocking has been activated and request the caller to enter a code to allow the caller's incoming telephone call to pass through.

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17. A method for automatically and selectively blocking incoming telephone calls, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) activating blocking of incoming telephone calls;
- (b) requesting a caller to enter a code for passing the incoming telephone calls;
- (c) determining if a correct code has been entered by the caller;
- (d) allowing an incoming telephone call of the caller to pass through where it is determined that the caller has entered the correct code; and
- (e) repeating steps (b) through (d) for all subsequent incoming telephone calls while blocking is activated.

18. The method of claim 17 further comprising the step of disconnecting the incoming telephone call if the correct code has not been entered within a predetermined time period.

19. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of alerting a person that an approved incoming telephone call has been received.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein the step of alerting comprises creating a localized audible sound.

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21. The method of claim 20 further comprising the step of means for deactivating said localized audible sound when the user's telephone is answered.

5 22. The method of claim 21 further comprising the step reactivating blocking of incoming telephone calls once the user's telephone is hung up if still within the time period.

10 23. The method of claim 17 further comprising the step of setting the correct time of day prior to step (a).

15 24. The method of claim 17 wherein step (a) includes the step of setting a reference time and a beginning time for activating blocking.

20 25. The method of claim 24 wherein step (a) further includes the step of setting an ending time for deactivating blocking.

26. The method of claim 17 wherein step (c) also includes determining if the correct code is entered during the designated period assigned to the code.